



News Release

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Contact: Sergeant Matt Gregory, Branson Police Department, 417- 334-8557

D.A.R.E. program gets donations for student T-shirts

Sergeant Matt Gregory and Officer Darold Donathan of the Branson Police Department were all smiles recently as they received checks from two of their D.A.R.E. program sponsors. The Track Family Fun Parks and the Pierce Arrow Theater each donated \$2,500 to the Branson Police Department's DARE program. The donations will allow the officers to purchase D.A.R.E. T-shirts for all of their 5th grade students.

The T-shirts reinforce the D.A.R.E. program which Gregory and Donathan teach in the Branson and Kirbyville school districts. D.A.R.E. stands for Drug Abuse Resistance Education. The program is used all over the United States as well as the rest of the world to teach youngsters about the hazards of drug abuse and violence. Officers focus on decision making skills that will help students make good choices regarding drug abuse as well as every other aspect of their lives.

Dan Britton of the Pierce Arrow Theater said he supports D.A.R.E because it focuses on youth.

"Branson has been so good to me, and I just want to give back," he said. "The Branson Police Department D.A.R.E. program is an excellent avenue for me to do this because keeping kids drug free should be a priority for everyone."

Julie Wilson, marketing manager for The Track shares Britton's enthusiasm.

"We're thrilled to be a part of the D.A.R.E. program," she said. "It teaches kids about making the right choices so they can be successful, and that's always been important to us here at The Track."

Sergeant Gregory and Officer Donathan said the department is fortunate to have exceptional community involvement by local donors, Branson schools and the police department.

"We are the envy of D.A.R.E. officers statewide because no other officers get the kind of community support that that we do," Gregory said. "No one else gets to hold their D.A.R.E. graduation in a real theater or take their kids on a field trip, and they surely don't have local businesspeople approaching them regarding sponsorship."



*Sgt. Matt Gregory of the Branson Police
Department with Julie Wilson from the Track*



Officer Darold Donathan (left) and Sgt. Matt Gregory
of the police department with Dan Britton of the
Pierce Arrow Theater